

Health Advisory:

Botulism Poisoning From Contaminated Canned Food Products

July 24, 2007

This document will be updated as new information becomes available. The current version can always be viewed at <http://www.dhss.mo.gov>

The Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services (DHSS) is now using 4 types of documents to provide important information to medical and public health professionals, and to other interested persons:

Health Alerts convey information of the highest level of importance which warrants immediate action or attention from Missouri health providers, emergency responders, public health agencies, and/or the public.

Health Advisories provide important information for a specific incident or situation, including that impacting neighboring states; may not require immediate action.

Health Guidances contain comprehensive information pertaining to a particular disease or condition, and include recommendations, guidelines, etc. endorsed by DHSS.

Health Updates provide new or updated information on an incident or situation; can also provide information to update a previously sent Health Alert, Health Advisory, or Health Guidance; unlikely to require immediate action.

Health Advisory
July 24, 2007

FROM: JANE DRUMMOND
DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: **Botulism Poisoning From Contaminated Canned Food Products**

This Health Advisory describes the risk of exposure to botulinum toxin from canned food products (and dog food) produced by Castleberry's Food Company of Augusta, Ga. Botulism is a neuromuscular illness caused by neurotoxins produced by the spore-forming bacterium *Clostridium botulinum*. **Prompt diagnosis, early treatment, and rapid reporting** to public health officials are essential to minimize the severity of the illness and the number of persons affected. All suspected cases of botulism should be immediately reported to the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) at 800/392-0272 (24 hours a day - 7 days a week). If indicated, DHSS will immediately contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to report the suspected case(s), arrange for a clinical consultation by telephone and, if appropriate, request release of botulinum antitoxin from CDC. Also, if indicated, arrangements will be made for the shipment of samples to CDC for testing.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is warning consumers and pet owners regarding canned food products and dog food produced by Castleberry's Food Company of Augusta, Ga., due to the risk of botulinum toxin. Two children in Texas and an Indiana couple who ate some of these products became seriously ill and have been hospitalized. A news release from FDA, last revised on July 23, 2007, is provided on pages 3-4. Specific food products under FDA jurisdiction that have been recalled are listed. Additional products under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Agriculture/Food Safety and Inspection Service (USDA/FSIS) have also been recalled. **For a complete list of all recalled products (as of July 23, 2007), go to the DHSS Food Recalls website at <http://www.dhss.mo.gov/FoodRecalls/>.** If additional information subsequently becomes available, it will be provided on this site. New information may also become available on the FDA website (<http://www.fda.gov/default.htm>) and the USDA/FSIS website (<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/home/index.asp>).

CDC has developed a series of questions and answers for consumers related to this situation, including recommendations for those who may have consumed a recalled product. See http://www.cdc.gov/botulism/botulism_faq.htm.

Foodborne botulism follows ingestion of botulinum toxin produced in food by *C. botulinum*. There is no person-to-person transmission. The incubation period for foodborne botulism is typically 12-36 hours after toxin ingestion, but in rare cases as early as 6 hours or as late as 10 days after ingesting the toxin.

Signs/symptoms include symmetric cranial neuropathies such as diplopia, drooping eyelids, difficulty swallowing, dry mouth, altered voice, or difficulty speaking. There is symmetric descending flaccid paralysis in a proximal to distal pattern. Abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea may, or may not, be seen. The disease process may progress to respiratory dysfunction from respiratory muscle paralysis. Note that botulism differs from

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other flaccid paralyses in that it always manifests initially with prominent cranial paralysis and its invariable descending progression, in its symmetry, and in its absence of sensory nerve damage.

Clinical diagnosis of botulism is confirmed by specialized laboratory testing that often requires days to complete. Routine laboratory test results are usually unremarkable. CSF studies are essentially normal although occasionally a borderline elevation in protein level is seen. A normal Tensilon test helps to differentiate botulism from myasthenia gravis; borderline positive tests can occur in botulism. Normal CTs and MRIs help to rule out CVA.

Initial diagnosis and appropriate treatment depend on clinical diagnosis through a thorough history and physical examination. **Treatment and management decisions should be made based on clinical diagnosis without waiting for laboratory confirmation.**

Laboratory confirmation is done by demonstrating the presence of toxin in serum, stool, or food, or by culturing *C. botulinum* from stool, a wound or food.

Patients with botulism should receive botulinum antitoxin as soon as possible. Antitoxin does not reverse paralysis but arrests its progression. Medical care providers who suspect botulism in a patient should immediately call the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' (DHSS') emergency telephone number (800/392-0272, 24 hours a day - 7 days a week). If indicated, DHSS will immediately contact CDC to report the suspected case(s), arrange for a clinical consultation by telephone and, if indicated, request release of botulinum antitoxin from CDC. Also, if indicated, arrangements will be made for the shipment of samples to CDC for testing (the Missouri State Public Health Laboratory is not equipped to process specimens for botulinum toxin).

Meticulous intensive care should be exercised, including monitoring of respiratory function and, when required, artificial ventilation. Recovery follows the regeneration of new neuromuscular connections, and 2-8 weeks of ventilatory support may be required in more severe cases.

More information on botulism is available at http://www.dhss.mo.gov/BT_Response/Med/m_botulism.htm. Questions should be directed to DHSS' Bureau of Communicable Disease Control and Prevention at 573/751-6113 or 866/628-9891.



FDA News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 21, 2007

Media Inquiries:

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301-827-6242

Consumer Inquiries:

888-INFO-FDA

FDA Expands Its Nationwide Warning About the Risk of Botulism Poisoning From Certain Castleberry's Food Products and Dog Food

This press release was revised on July 23, 2007, to update the "best by" dates in the fourth paragraph.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is expanding its [July 18](#) warning to consumers. This expansion is for consumers and pet owners regarding canned food products and dog food produced by Castleberry's Food Company of Augusta, Ga., due to the risk of botulinum toxin. Castleberry's is expanding the recall to include all of the following canned products with all "best by" and code dates, and FDA is warning consumers not to purchase or eat any of the canned products listed in the table below.

Hot Dog Chili Sauces	SIZE	UPC CODES
Austex Onion Hot Dog Chili Sauce	10 OZ	30300-97101
Austex Hot Dog Chili Sauce	10 OZ	30300-99533
Castleberry's Hot Dog Chili Sauce	10 OZ	30300-00101
Castleberry's Onion Hot Dog Chili Sauce	10 OZ	30300-07101
Bunker Hill Hot Dog Chili Sauce	10 OZ	75266-04152
Kroger Hot Dog Chili Sauce	10 OZ	11110-83942
Meijer Hot Dog Chili Sauce	10 OZ	41250-85862
Food Lion Hot Dog Chili Sauce	10 OZ	35826-06911
Bloom Hot Dog Chili Sauce	10 OZ	25439-92448
Thrifty Maid Hot Dog Chili Sauce	10 OZ	21140-21367
Natural Balance Eatables dog food varieties:		
Irish Stew with Beef Dog Food	15 OZ	23633-59860
Chinese Take Out with Sauce with Vegetables and Chicken Dog Food	15 OZ	23633-59861
Southern Style Dumplings with Gravy with Chicken and Vegetables Dog Food	15 OZ	23633-59862
Hobo Chili with Chicken Pasta Dog Food	15 OZ	23633-59863

The agency is expanding its warning based in part on FDA test results and information obtained during a joint FDA and U.S. Department of Agriculture inspection of the Castleberry's facility in Augusta, Ga.

Exposure to botulinum toxin can be fatal and two people in Texas and two people in Indiana remain seriously ill and hospitalized with botulism poisoning associated with eating Castleberry's Hot Dog Chili Sauce.

While the previous recall and the known illnesses are linked to "best by" dates of April 30 to May 22, 2009, the firm has extended the recall to include all products listed irrespective of "best by" date. The firm is cooperating with FDA in the recall of these products and has ceased processing and distribution.

In addition, Castleberry's is recalling other products containing meat, which are regulated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. USDA is also warning the public not to eat certain brands of Castleberry's products containing meat. The list of these USDA-regulated products can be viewed at this link to the USDA website: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/News_&_Events/Recall_033_2007_expanded/index.asp

Consumers who have any of these products or any foods made with these products should throw them away immediately. Double bag the cans in plastic bags that are tightly closed then place in a trash receptacle for non-recyclable trash outside of the home. Additional instructions for safe disposal can be found at www.cdc.gov/botulism/botulism_faq.htm

Retailers that have any of these products are asked to assure that they are removed from use and do not accidentally get reintroduced for sale, service or donation.

Symptoms of botulism poisoning in humans can begin from 6 hours to 2 weeks after eating food that contains the toxin. Symptoms may include double vision, blurred vision, drooping eyelids, slurred speech, difficulty swallowing, and muscle weakness that moves progressively down the body, affecting the shoulders first then descending to the upper arms, lower arms, thighs, calves, etc. Botulism poisoning can also cause paralysis of the breathing muscles which can result in death unless assistance with breathing (mechanical ventilation) is provided. Individuals who show these symptoms and who may have recently eaten one of the Castleberry's products currently under recall should seek immediate medical attention.

The disease has only been seen occasionally in dogs and has not been reported in cats. Ferrets are highly susceptible to botulinum toxin. The incubation period can be 2 hours to 2 weeks; in most cases, the symptoms appear after 12 to 24 hours. Botulism is characterized by progressive motor paralysis. Typical clinical signs may include muscle paralysis, difficulty breathing, chewing and swallowing, visual disturbances and generalized weakness may also occur. Death usually results from paralysis of the respiratory or cardiac muscles. Pet owners who have used these products and whose pets have these symptoms should contact their veterinarian immediately. At this time we are not aware of pet illnesses associated with these products although we recommend that all these products should be discarded.

Castleberry's recommends consumers with any questions or concerns about this recall should go to Castleberry's website (www.castleberrys.com) or call Castleberry's consumer hotline at 1-800-203-4412 or 1-888-203-8446.

Consumers with questions can call FDA at 1-888-SAFEFOOD.